



SENATOR RUNNER'S WEEK IN REVIEW

A WEEKLY REVIEW THAT WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE



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Bringing Home Federal Dollars

Much has been written about California being a donor state because Californians spend more in federal taxes than we get back in services.

What is not discussed publicly is there are different grant programs available for states to utilize, but California does not always access them. As the Legislature reviews the budget this year and all of the state's expenditures, I will be watching for programs that the state provides, but that the federal government is willing to pay for. One such program has come to my attention that would save Californians close to \$300 million this year.

In 2002, the Bush administration issued a regulation that permits states to utilize funding available under the federal State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). This federal program would provide coverage to unborn children and their mothers.

California currently has a state taxpayer funded program called Access for Infants and Mothers (AIM). AIM provides prenatal care for low and moderate income women, where women pay a low cost monthly premium to access the services. This program costs taxpayers \$71 million for the current year and a projected \$78 million next year.

The federal SCHIP program has not been accessed to offset the taxpayer costs to the AIM program yet. This is an area where the state has the potential of receiving \$96 million from the federal government over the next two years.

That is why I am authoring Senate Bill 456 which would require the state to access federal funds whenever available to offset the costs of the AIM program. Governor Schwarzenegger also has this proposal in his budget.

Utilizing federal funds could go even further, if the state used them to also pay for the prenatal services provided through Medi-Cal. Currently, the state fully funds prenatal services in Medi-Cal but the federal SCHIP grants could also be used to save \$191 million over the next two years. Each year, thereafter, the savings would be close to \$100 million. This proposal is also in the Governor's budget.

News of the Week

[Runner's Bill Provides More Flexibility & Accountability to Charter Schools](#)

[Bureau of Land Management Releases West Mojave Plan](#)

[Proposed 10.4% Cut in Workers' Comp Rates for Summer](#)

[A Look at Problems with New State Stem Cell Institute](#)

[Oversight for Stem Cell Agency is a Good Idea](#)

[Santa Paula Hospital Land Deal Gets OK](#)

[Los Angeles Community College District Wastes Millions](#)

[Weather Helps Efforts Clean Up Pyramid Lake](#)

Seven other states are currently using federal funds to offset the cost of prenatal services that they provide to low-income women. Why isn't California?

There has been some resistance to move forward on this proposal from fringe groups. The Legislature should not bend to these groups. We need to be good stewards of your tax dollars and to root out waste and duplication. Your tax dollars are already paying for this federal program so there is no need for your tax dollars to pay again for the same program here in California.

We are already two years past due in utilizing these funds that will result in \$287 million in total savings this year and millions more in savings every year thereafter. It is time to stop wasting taxpayer dollars and access more federal funds.

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